

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending in this application. Claim 1 has been amended. Claim 8 has been added claiming sheets of knit construction as disclosed at page 3 of the specification. No claims have been cancelled. Thus, claims 1-8 are subject to examination.

Art Rejections:

Independent claim 1 (from which all other claims depend) stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hsu (2003/0217946) in view of U.S. Patent 5,361,905 to McQueeny et al.. In light of the above amendment continued rejection on this basis is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

As illustrated through reference to FIGS. 1 and 2 of the application as filed, the present invention utilizes columns of stacked folded wiper sheets arranged in adjacent relation with the folded edges of one stack opposing the folded edges of the other stack. The arrangement utilized does not require a barrier between the stacks. As explained at page 5 of the application, a user can insert his or her fingers between the opposing folded edges and the folded edges are readily grasped as discrete units.

As regards the cited art, Applicant notes that in the primary reference to Hsu a separating element such as the removed opening cover is used for the express purpose of separating the decks and holding them in place. See, paragraph 17. Moreover, as best understood Hsu appears to contemplate a relatively solid structure to support the separating elements and the stacks. This interpretation appears to be consistent with the fact that in a number of the embodiments the separating elements are actually formed from portions of the container.

Applicant respectfully submits that modifying Hsu to incorporate a pliable containment envelope with stacked folded articles arranged in adjacent columns such that during use the folded lateral boundary of the first column is unobstructed from contacting the folded lateral

boundary of the second column would appear to be contrary to the teachings of Hsu and would fundamentally change the principle of operation. In this regard Applicant notes that removing the barrier in Hsu would eliminate the ability to hold the stacks in position separated from one another. This would be contrary to the teachings in Hsu. See, paragraph 17, final sentence. In addition, using a pliable containment envelope would be expected to make holding the stacks in place even more difficult. As stated at MPEP §2143.01, if a proposed modification would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified or if the proposed modification would render the prior art invention being modified unsatisfactory for its intended purpose, then there is no suggestion or motivation for making the proposed modification.

Claims 2-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. (103(a) as being obvious over Hsu (2003/0217946) in view of U.S. Patent 5,361,905 to McQueeney et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,026,953 to Nakamura. Continued rejection on this basis is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

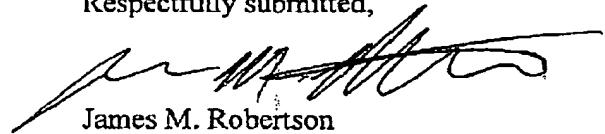
As indicated above, Applicant respectfully submits that the base independent claim is patentable. Accordingly, it is submitted that all claims depending therefrom are likewise patentable. As regards at least claim 2, Applicant also respectfully notes that modifying Hsu to include a resealable cover element as claimed would appear to prevent the use of the removed cover as a barrier element in the manner advocated by the primary reference. Accordingly this would appear to leave Hsu without the advocated barrier element thus departing from the teachings of the primary reference and weighing against the motivation for making the modification.

CONCLUSION:

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims stand in condition for allowance. In the event that any issue remains unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney in the hope that such issue may be resolved in an expedient and satisfactory manner.

While the submission of this paper is believed to be timely, to any extent that an extension is required, a petition for such an extension is hereby made and authorization is provided to deduct any fee necessary for the acceptance of this paper from Deposit Account 50-1424.

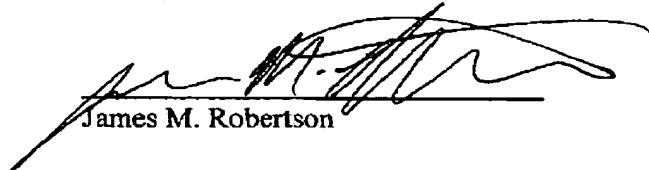
Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office at 703-872-9306 on March 4, 2005.



James M. Robertson